

GTA Board Meeting Minutes**February 27, 2012**County Square, 301 University Ridge, Greenville, SC
Conference Room H (Bauer)Board Members in Attendance:

Mr. Matt Carter
Ms. Pat Dilger
Mr. Al Gray, Treasurer
Mr. David Mitchell, Chairman
Mr. Jason Tankersley
Mr. Jan Williams

Absent Board Member(s):

Mr. Trey Fouché, Asst. Chairman

Staff in Attendance:

Greg Baney, Transit Planner/Grants Manager
Lorrie Brown, Administrative Assistant
Phil Robey (Interim Transit Director/Director of OMB)
Shelia Schmitt, Transit General Manager

Others in Attendance:

Keith Brockington, GPATS Planner
Karen Crawford, City Comptroller
Warren Rowe, City Projects Manager
Gaye Sprague, City Council Member (GTA Liaison)
Kevin Tomas, Greene Finney and Horton

The meeting was called to order at 12:00 noon by Mr. David Mitchell, Board Chairman.

Quorum established.

Chairman Mitchell stated that since the last Board Meeting our Director, Carl Jackson, has moved on to another opportunity out of town. Phil Robey will oversee operations of GTA along with Greg Baney and Shelia Schmitt. Greg will handle the Administration side and Shelia Schmitt will handle the Operations side. They will report to Phil Robey (Director of OMB).

Approval of January 27, 2011 Annual Meeting Minutes:

A motion was made by Mr. Matt Carter to approve the January 23, 2012 Annual Meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Jason Tankersley. No opposers. The motion carries.

Development Committee Report – Meeting Date Tuesday, February 21st (Report given by Ms. Pat Dilger):

- **Wayne Leftwich gave a presentation on the Connections for Sustainability Planning Grant awarded to the City of Greenville which will be spent over three years. It is a combination FTA and HUD Grant. Highlights:**
 - The government wants to see affordable housing work together with Transit.
 - There is an economic component in terms of getting people to jobs and economic development opportunities. There is also an education and outreach component.
 - The first element the City is looking at is the housing component where a development review process analysis will be done to make sure planning and engineering have clear connections.
 - They will then look more closely at the proposed BRT Corridor and the feasibility for transit oriented development.
 - The kickoff meeting will be held March 1, 2012 at 6:00 p.m. at the West Greenville Community Center to see how the community feels about housing and the possibility for transit in the neighborhoods that are focused.
 - The Committee is interested in the potential for thousands of jobs at CUICAR. The focus will be on planning for the west side where unemployment in the three neighborhoods is as high as 40%.
 - They are looking at the potential of a park in the flood plains for this area which will be a great amenity for the entire city. This area has the Swamp Rabbit Trail, the Kroc Center and AJ Wittenberg Elementary School.
 - The education and outreach portion is unique. There is a livability educator who will talk with children, adults and businesses regarding the importance of walkability and connecting people with jobs. Furman and Clemson University students are helping with this effort.
 - Discussion from Presentation: There will be the potential for thousands of jobs at CUICAR. There was discussion about reaching jobs in the interim period at Donaldson and getting to educational opportunities at Greenville Tech for the more technologically advanced jobs that will be coming up. The Amtrak Station could act as some sort of hub. They will look at the BRT route more closely and also look at past studies and gather data. Greg Baney is staying on top of this to insure we don't miss anything along the way. It was felt that there was a suburban mindset in the urban neighborhoods and that housing density will be really important for the BRT to be successful. The livability and outreach program was also discussed and helping neighbors to understand that density can be beautiful and walkability can add to the quality of life. Downtown Greenville was given as an example.
- The person the City hires as Transit Director will be focused solely on Transit. Parking was put back under Public Works. The Development Committee felt the new Transit Director should be charismatic, politically savvy, possess strong leadership skills, present well and be able to communicate the importance of transit as an investment to the public. Since the Board Chairmanship changes every two years, the Committee felt it was important to have a permanent face for communications with City Council, County Council and the region.

- There was discussion of the Transportation Bill proposed from both the House and the Senate. The House and Senate bills are very different, and the House bill could challenge funding for Transit going forward.
- GTA was asked to participate in a simulated plane crash at GSP Airport as part of the disaster relief program by County First Responders.
- The TASC Conference will be held in March, and GTA has been nominated for **Overall Best Transit System** in the state.
- There have been complaints about trash at our bus stops and some businesses have made us move bus stops. Trash cans are now on our buses. A grant was found to cover the cost of putting trash cans at bus stops. The City cleans bus shelters in the County and in the City, but not at bus stops. The Board asked whether community service people could be utilized. Mr. Robey stated that this has been scaled back due to the budgetary constraints and availability, but he will check into whether this is an alternative.
- Tiger IV was discussed.
- The Graham Foundation has reviewed applications. We submitted an application for a match to support service to GSP Airport. *Mr. Baney informed the Board that GTA did not get the grant.*
- Phase III of the Transit Center Project was discussed. We have an intern working on the survey for Bike Related Services. *Mr. Rowe stated that surveys should start going out tomorrow. The Board will be notified of who will receive the bike survey. The survey will help us determine who would use a bike station on the Washington street end. Ms. Dilger stated that it would be good to have bike related services, but we want to make sure that we have public support.*
- Cost Efficiency is still around the national average of approximately 23%.
- Mr. Baney reported that a meeting was held this morning in Simpsonville, and the feedback was positive.
- The Marketing Plan should be completed around March 31. The Marketing Plan uses St. Louis Transit as a model.
- Some surveys were taken at the GSP airport, and from those surveys it looks like 30% of persons flying into the airport are coming downtown for business. This is a preliminary survey.
- The RFP is close to completion for the Downtown Trolley.
- The JARC/New Freedom cycle has closed, and we are hoping to receive a grant to expand the St. Francis/CUICAR shuttle. We were unable to have an application for a Travelers Rest Shuttle in this funding cycle. *Mr. Baney stated that we had been working with Furman, NGU, Travelers Rest Wal-Mart and the City of Travelers Rest to get an agreement from each entity to bring money to the table to pay the 50% match, but we could not get a commitment by the grant deadline.*
- We have reached out to Furman University and North Greenville University regarding obtaining contracts for student usage fees for transit. This is still a work in progress.
- Bus shelters are on hold.
- Ridership is up by 13,000; revenue is up by \$20,000. Ms. Schmitt is monitoring non-profit ticket sales due to concern that they are being misused. GAP ridership is double what it was last year; Ms. Schmitt is looking at ways of doing more careful GAP assessments. The Driver Training Program is being changed to line up with the Safety and Security Environmental Preparedness Plan. We will take part in an upcoming Bus Roadeo sponsored by TASC. The Vendstar ticket vending machine will be delivered at the end of March. Vehicle Maintenance overtime numbers went down.
- Mr. Fouché felt that we needed to be in tune with the Poinsett Highway Re-Development and see what opportunities exist for transit oriented development along this highway and find a way to be involved with the planning process.
- The City had 61 employees to take advantage of the free fare, and the County had 146 for the month of January.

Audit Review

Presentation by Kevin Tomas who shared the results of the audit conducted by Greene Finney and Horton (draft copy of the financials is included in the Board Package):

- Understanding of the Audit: This is the Authority's financial statement. GFH is engaged to do an opinion that is a reasonable assurance and not an absolute assurance. They use materiality and look at total assets and total revenue and get a percentage of this and look at everything over a certain amount. Under this amount, they will take a sample. They have to maintain their independence and cannot act in management authority or make decisions for management. If they have any recommendations or suggestions they take them to management, and they have to approve it.
- The Authority was given an **unqualified opinion**. They believe the amounts are materially correct. An unqualified opinion is the **best** that can be received.
- Total net assets increased by approximately 2.1 million making the total net assets 8.4 million. The primary reason was the new bus purchases and the completion of Phase I and Phase II renovations of the Transit Center. All of these are capital items which increased the net assets.
- The Authority's Unrestricted Net Assets **decreased** substantially. This was due to increased operating expenses as well as lower contributions. The ending balance represents 1% of our operating expenses at the end of 9/30/2011.
- Operating Revenue is up. Passenger fares went from \$603,000 to \$703,000. Passenger revenue increased due to increased fees and an increase in ridership in 2011.
- Lease Revenue remained about the same at around \$45,000 in 2011 and \$49,000 in 2010.
- Vending Income and Rental went from \$7,600 to \$23,500.

- Operating Expenses went up about \$300,000 from 4.3 million to 4.6 million due to a number of reasons (increase in fuel costs around \$155,000 and an increase in materials and supplies around \$56,000).
- There was a decrease in Services of around \$200,000 due to the Vision and Master Plan that was completed in 2010.
- Wages and Salaries increased by \$150,000 due to an increase in the hours of operation as well as additional overtime.
- There was increase in the Depreciation Expense of \$173,000 due to the purchase of buses as well as the completion of Phase I and II of the Transit Center Renovations.
- Non-Operating Revenue increased by 1.2 million dollars over 2010. A lot of this is due to federal grants at 1.3 million per year. A lot of this is for capital items. Buses were purchased at 100% with Federal funds. There was a slight decrease in local contributions of approximately \$80,000 (anything outside of Federal and State is considered local). *Ms. Crawford stated that this is because the County and City funded two buses in 2010 and they contributed for the Transit Vision and Master Plan in 2010. The City also provided the local contribution for the Transit Center Renovations.*
- No findings** were found.
- Overall Summary of Financial Condition:** The decrease in the Authority's unrestricted net assets is a concern. The Net Unrestricted Represents 1% of GTA's operating expenses for 2011. GFH understands that the City is looking for ways of increasing revenue sources. The Authority needs to continue to manage costs and seek new revenue sources and current enhancements of revenue sources. For any new expansions, the Authority needs to make sure that what they are entering into is effective and efficient and that overall costs are covered because anything that is not covered will go against Unrestricted Net Assets.

Finance Committee Report – Meeting Date February 16th (Report given by Mr. Matt Carter):

- Greene Finney and Horton went through the audit in detail. *Ms. Crawford noted that the only change to the Audit Draft presented to the Finance Committee was to separate the two grants on the state filing; however, the numbers remained the same. The two grants were separated at the request of the SCDOT.*

The Finance Committee recommends to the Board acceptance of the audit by Greene Finney and Horton pending review by the full Board and any major changes noted by Board Members. Since this is a recommendation from the Finance Committee, a second is not required. A vote is taken and there are no opposers. The recommendation carries.

The Finance Committee recommends to the full Board that Greene Finney and Horton be renewed as GTA auditors for the fiscal year 2012. Since this is a recommendation from the Finance Committee, a second is not required. A vote is taken and there are no opposers. The recommendation carries.

- The operating matrix was reviewed. Budget issues continue (fuel is off). Overtime is better in some areas but not in others due in part to not being able to fill part-time positions and having full time employees work overtime. There was discussion regarding the possibility of having a Utility person instead of Mechanic for duties such as changing tires and fueling the buses, etc.

The Finance Committee recommends approval of the invoices presented to the full Board in the amount of \$305,882.13 (\$303,816.14 regular invoices and a \$2,065.99 JARC/New Freedom Invoice) pending the availability of funds. Since this is a recommendation from the Finance Committee, a second is not required. A vote is taken and there are no opposers. The recommendation carries.

January 2012 GTA Finance Board Invoices

Date	Company	Description	Invoice #	Amount	
1/6/2012	City of Greenville	GTA Board Contract – December 2011	73773	268,888.74	1
R 2/6/2012	City of Greenville	Switch replace – Transit Station/Routematch Project	73896	2,000.00	3
1/17/2012	Federal Express	Deliver documents to Implicit Purchase Pooling Solutions	7-760-4654	30.28	5
1/30/2012	Greene Finney & Horton LLP	Final Bill – Audit Services Fiscal Year Ended 9/30/11	14001	15,000.00	4
1/18/2012	Herlong Law Firm LLC	Legal Services provided October 2011	390	625.00	4
1/31/2012	LS3P Neal Prince	MMSA Inc. consult fees, Bike Station Design fees	26128	1,748.25	3
R 1/20/2012	Routematch Software	Initiation Phase	10235	13,310.32	6
1/20/2012	Strossners Bakery Inc.	Board of Directors Annual Meeting	29298	564.00	4
F 2/13/2012	TD Bank Card Services	Supplies & Dues		632.53	4
F 2/13/2012	TD Bank Card Services	Greyhound terminal small equipment & supplies		1,017.02	
Total				\$303,816.14	

JARC/New Freedom Invoices

Date	Company	Description	Invoice #	Amount
1/18/2012	City of Greenville	Oct-Dec 2011 Accessible Bus Use	73771	2,065.99
Total				2,065.99

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- 1 The invoice relates to various items, applicable portion grant funded, GTA responsible for 20%.
- 2 The invoice relates to the JARC/New Freedom grant.
- 3 The invoice relates to the Transit Center Renovation project, 80% grant funds, local match provided by the City.
- 4 Board Expense – No federal funding applies.
- 5 The invoice relates to bus purchases/Implicit payment, restricted cash available.
- 6 The invoice relates to CAD/AVL grant, 80% grant funds, local match provided by the City.

- Mr. Robey informed the Committee that the Lobbyist for the City is staying on top of the new legislation for Federal Highway Transportation, and the City will keep the Board informed of any changes to this legislation as the legislation progresses.

The Finance Committee recommends to the full Board approval of the purchase order for the Route Match CAD/AVL system for the contracted amount of \$597,809 (grant more than this amount). Since this is a recommendation from the Finance Committee, a second is not required. A vote is taken and there are no opposers. The recommendation carries.

- The deadline for Tiger IV has passed. Most of Tiger IV was for high speed rail.
- The Committee discussed the **New Starts** and **Small Starts Grants** which could be good for BRT systems. GTA/Greenlink should have a NEPA study completed to qualify for the grants. GTA needs to secure a partner for \$12,000 which is the 20% match needed for the Study. Without this study being completed, Mr. Baney felt it would be difficult to qualify for these grants and others that become available. Mr. Carter stated that if we are going to pursue BRT and accomplish what is in our Master Plan, we must have a NEPA study completed. The NEPA study would address how the BRT would affect the environment around it. It was suggested that the Board could seek \$6,000 from the City and \$6,000 from the County to do the NEPA. In addition to the NEPA Study we also need a commitment so GTA can own the land even if it is a contingency so that the FTA can be guaranteed that if they award the grant that GTA will own it enough for the FTA to keep their ownership in it until the useful life has expired.

Keith Brockington stated that the rail is considered unused, but it is classified as active by the State Transportation Board. In order for anything to be done within this right of way if we are impacting the ability to use those rails by a bus system or bikeway, we would need to apply for a *change of status* to be requested by the State Transportation Board. It would have to be initiated by the GCEDC who is the current owner. If they allow the rail corridor to be purchased from them, whoever purchases it would have to initiate it. This process would have to be completed before anything can be done. This process could take a few months or 2 years. When dealing with the railroads, the process can take a long time. The Board questioned whether Doug Frate with the SCDOT could assist us. Mr. Baney stated that if the County steps forward to request that the process gets started then perhaps he could assist as a way to expedite the process. He stated that since the rail system is classified as active but unused if it goes to inactive they could lose ownership of the rail corridor. They will not lose the rail back to previous owner as long as they keep the rails intact. Our focus is on the area between Pleasantburg and CU ICAR. The GCEDC Rail Corridor Study and the Transit Vision and Master Plan looked at the right of way, and there is enough right-of-way. There is room to get a two lane exclusive bus way and a ten foot bikeway to accompany it, and not touch the rails. This involves the same process mentioned above. The County has stated that we can do something beside the tracks, but the tracks cannot be covered. We cannot impede their ability to use the tracks. Some County Council members have a fundamental belief that they might want to restore it for passenger or high speed rail. When we go to the County seeking permission to use the corridor, we must be ready. The NEPA study gets us over the grants portion if we make the assumption that we can get it reclassified. Mr. Carter stated that we have a letter of understanding from the County outlining how this would occur. It is not a legal document and would not give us ownership. We do not have to own it, but we have to have the right to it for a length of time. Mr. Baney stated that the FTA wants to see an MOU where a governing entity states that they can use the land until the useful life expires.

Mr. Baney stated that the **New Starts Program** was designed for BRT, and he feels this is our best bet to pursue funding for the BRT. There is the alternative analysis phase where the Board would authorize the NEPA which would complete the environmental and market study which would look at the environmental impact of the BRT and secure the MOU. They would then do a market demographic of the possible users. From this point on, we would be eligible during the preliminary engineering phase and the implementation phase to receive federal funding from FTA. As far as the next steps are concerned if we can have classification of the line taken care of, receive the MOU, do the NEPA study, do the preliminary market study, then we can apply for funding for phase II. This is annual apportionment funding is released each year under 5309 discretionary funding. It is competitive, but it can be applied for each year. It is consistent with the 5307 annual apportionment, and must be entered in TEAM by April. The Structure of the MOU is there but it would have to be certified and signed by GTA, the GCEDC and the full County Council. Mr. Baney stated that the big question is once it is funded how it will be sustained and supported; which is why the market study is important. Before we get any federal funding we have to decide if the market exists for this type of service. If it does, we will have raw numbers

to know how much we will have to come up with locally. Ms. Dilger stated this is the chicken and egg problem we have had for the ten years we have been looking at this. We need the density to support transit and we need the transit oriented development. We need for the City and County to say they are committed to having the corridor here and committed to have these stations at these locations, and the transit oriented development could then begin to happen. This would allow Developers to have some type of predictability, and beyond that we can seek money to make the corridor actually happen. Mr. Carter stated that both the City and County signed off on our Vision and Master Plan two years ago which addressed the BRT.

Action Item: Chairman Mitchell has assigned the BRT to the Development Committee as an agenda item so that we can begin the grant application process next April. Ms. Dilger clarified that there are three things they need to look at 1) Raising money for NEPA 2) Getting an MOU from the County and 3) Doing a market study of potential users.

Mr. Baney stated that he is encouraged by the Connections for Sustainability Grant because it allows us to obtain the market study for free. The City of Greenville is doing this through the grant received through Tiger II Planning Grant. Once this is completed, it will put GTA in a much better position to request the funding. It had not been pursued because there are some essential steps that must be taken prior to putting pen to paper. The bigger question which staff has been absorbed with for the past two years is the looming reality that by FY 2013 the current service will not be operable much less an extended service. In terms of prioritizing, he feels this is where we start. Mr. Baney stated that The Connections for Sustainability Grant should be completed in September.

Mr. Robey stated we will develop (working with the Development Committee) a timeline of events that have to take place of milestones required to accomplish this. Mr. Carter suggested that we not just focus on the New Starts/Small Starts but for all grants. Mr. Baney stated that the same steps must be followed for all federal funding.

- **Additional Comments:**

Mr. Carter noted that Seneca was awarded Proterra buses through the Tigger Grant. This was accomplished by having the utility company pay the local match by buying the charging station for Seneca, and they leveraged the rest up to get electric buses. Mr. Carter stated that it seems like something similar can be done here if we have some momentum and interest in pursuing it.

Ms. Dilger stated that we have always combined the Proterra Grant with the BRT. However, perhaps we should look at a Proterra grant to add an electric bus to our fleet of buses as a free standing grant on its own independent of the BRT. It would be great to have a Proterra bus whether a BRT bus or an everyday bus.

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Matt Carter. Mr. Al Gray seconded the motion. No opposers. The motion carries.

Prepared by: Lorrie Brown
Lorrie Brown, Greenlink Administrative Assistant

Date: 2-27-12

Approved by: David C. Mitchell
Mr. David Mitchell, GTA Board Chairman

Date: 3.26.2012